

Workplace Incivility and Knowledge Hiding: Does Transformational Leadership Matters?

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Organisations do not own knowledge but employees do. Considering the knowledge hiding issue, the current study aimed to investigate the direct impact of workplace incivility on knowledge hiding. Moreover, it also examines the moderating role of transformational leadership by using purposive sampling technique. Data was collected (N=205) from public sector organisations. The collected data neither bear common method bias nor multicollinearity. The results indicated a positive relation between workplace incivility and knowledge hiding. Transformational leadership moderated the link between workplace incivility and knowledge hiding in such a way that relationship was stronger when higher transformational leadership style.

Keywords: Knowledge hiding; transformational leadership; workplace incivility

1. INTRODUCTION

In organisations, individuals are probable to share knowledge with colleagues (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2002; Gagné, 2009) and in order to simplify knowledge management system, the organisations invest and bear more expenses (Wang & Noe, 2010). To increase knowledge sharing, the organisations initiated steps including developing incentive systems (Brock, Zmud, Kim, & Lee, 2005), shaping corporate culture that enhances knowledge sharing (Connelly & Kelloway, 2003; Muller, Spiliopoulou, & Lenz, 2005), support interpersonal relationships and extend social network (e.g., Kuvaas, Buch, & Dysvik, 2012). Irrespective of the payback of knowledge sharing, numerous employees are hiding knowledge from their colleagues (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2002). As organisations have no ownership over the “intellectual abilities” of their employees, they have no right to force employees to share their knowledge with other employees (Kelloway & Barling, 2000).

The results are vague regarding the knowledge sharing, regardless of the efforts and systematic manner of knowledge sharing within organisations (Hislop, 2002). Irrespective of the encouragement and benefits awarding for sharing knowledge, yet workers are disinclined to share their knowledge (Swap, Leonard, Shields, & Abrams, 2001). Knowledge sharing and knowledge hiding are not the conflicting terms, but are different phenomenon (Connelly, Zweig, Webster & Trougakos, 2012). Many study have explored the relation between knowledge sharing and job outcomes, and much attention

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has been given to explore the factors contributing to knowledge sharing (Wang & Noe, 2010), for example, knowledge sharing behaviour is positively correlated with employees' work behaviour like job performance (Henttonen et al. 2016; Kohansal, Alimoradi & Bohloul, 2013) job satisfaction (Kianto, Vanhala & Heilmann, 2016) organisational commitment (Davoudi & Fartash, 2012), and job involvement (Teh, & Sun, 2012). Regarding the knowledge hiding, it is still folded for practitioners and researchers (Davenport & Prusak, 1997) also it has been acknowledged as an area demanding more research (Webster et al., 2008; Greenberg, Brinsfield, & Edwards, 2007). Unexpectedly, few studies have been carried out in knowledge hiding domain rather than related constructs e.g. deception (Carlson & George, 2004). Therefore, researchers have recommended more research in such domains (Černe, Nerstad, Dysvik & Škerlavaj, 2014; Connelly & Zweig, 2015; Khalid, Bashir, Khan, & Abbas, 2018).

Uncivil behaviours are common in job place (Milam, Spitzmueller & Penney, 2009; Pearson & Porath, 2002). Since 2000, workplace negativity has appeared to be an important topic in the organisational behaviour literature (Schilpzand, Pater & Erez, 2016), for example, 50 percent of employees experience work place incivility once in a week, among the 98 percent employees, who experienced work place incivility at their work place (Porath & Pearson, 2013).

Some factors related to employees who hide knowledge in organisations, are organisational culture (Webster et al., 2008), knowledge sharing climate, task-relatedness, knowledge complexity, and distrust (Connelly et al., 2012, Webster et al., 2008), competition and time (Connelly, Ford, Gallupe, Turel, & Zweig, 2009), psychological ownership (Peng, 2013), knowledge complication (Pan & Zhang, 2014), work environment and personality (Demirkasimoglu, 2015), goal interdependence (Bavik, 2015), and creativity (Rhee & Choi, 2017). However, less attention has been given to the influence of leadership on employee knowledge hiding behaviour, and have been studied in direct relation with knowledge sharing behaviour. Leaders largely control various forms of subordinates' resources and allocation, deep impact on subordinates' work and life, and thus influence on subordinates' work attitudes and behaviours (Cai, 2009). Leadership style is behaviour, exhibited by a leader while guiding organisational members in suitable direction (Certo & Certo, 2006). Experience, education and training improve leaders' style (Dessler, 2004). Transformational leadership is considered as an effective style (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999) and has been found to be significantly correlated with employees' behaviour and job outcome (Tickle, Brownlee, & Nailon, 2005).

According to Lim and Lee (2011) to describe the nature of knowledge hiding and to explain the possible antecedents and consequences, studies have been carried out. Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) explains the interaction and relation regarding the exchange process. So, based on the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) the current research aims to investigate the impact of workplace incivility on knowledge hiding behaviour, and the moderating role of transformational leadership between the two constructs. It is in line with the call to test and the impact of moderating role with respect to knowledge hiding (Connelly & Zweig, 2015; Khalid et al., 2018).

Workplace incivility is an organisational phenomenon (Lim & Lee, 2011) and is a concept of rude treatment, impatient and showing lesser respect to colleagues (Kane

&Montgomery, 1998). Irrespective of the fact that most of the studies regarding workplace incivility have been carried out in western culture (Cameron, & Webster, 2011; Holten, Hancock, Persson, Hansen, & Høgh, 2016; Porath, & Pearson, 2012; Sliter, Jex, Wolford, & McInnerney, 2010), few studies have investigated that workplace incivility is quite normal in Asian settings (Lim & Lee, 2011). Furthermore, Yueng and Griffin, (2008) explored the extent of incivility experienced by employees in Asian countries; China 5 percent, Hong Kong 10 percent, Singapore 12 percent and the India was the highest i.e. 17 percent). It can be inferred that the workplace incivility may have the same harmful impact on individual and organisational outcomes in a developing Asian country (Pakistan) due to the very limited empirical results available. Thus, this study will add evidences from the Asian context in the same perspective.

1.1. Literature Review

1.1.1. *Work place Incivility and Knowledge Hiding*

Davetian (2009) defined civility as “the degree to which people of one culture communicate and behave in ways which shows concern for the wellbeing of others and also for the welfare of the common culture that they share.” Workplace civility serves to set and preserve standards in order to cultivate reciprocal respect and build relationships (Gonthier & Morrissey, 2002). Yet, uncivil behaviour in the workplace continues to be common. Earlier, the construct of workplace incivility has been defined as “less-intensive deviant behaviour with indecisive intent to harm the target, violating organizational norms of conducts. Uncivil behaviours are typically impolite and ill-mannered, exhibiting lack of esteem for others” (Andersson & Pearson, 1999).

Research has indicated that workplace incivility negatively effects workers resulting in increased stress, absenteeism, turnover and decreased job satisfaction (e.g., Lim, Cortina & Magley, 2008; Porath & Pearson, 2010), productivity by interfering with workflow as well as innovation, creativity, knowledge sharing, and general helpfulness (e.g., Estes & Wang, 2008; Montgomery, Kane & Vance, 2004; Porath & Erez, 2007). In 1998, twenty-five percent of workers reported being treated rudely on a weekly basis; that number rose to fifty percent in 2005 and over fifty percent in 2011 (Porath & Pearson, 2013).

Upon request by others, the intentional hiding or withholding knowledge is referred as knowledge hiding (Connelly et al., 2012). Some authors address the same as “knowledge withholding”, like Lin and Wang (2012) defined knowledge withholding as hiding the knowledge that is imperative or significant to others. Similarly, Duffy, Ganster and Pagon (2002) pointed out the problems of knowledge withholding as a social deflation at job place. As manager may involve in dynamic or passive discouraging attitudes, by withholding the required knowledge, giving demeaning remarks to employees as well as displaying passive aggressive behaviour i.e. “silent treatment”. Hence, knowledge hiding is not thought to be a completely negative phenomenon when knowledge hiders aim to defend themselves, a colleague or other party’s feelings, and it can take distinctive types. The first one is evasive hiding that contains some dishonesty where knowledge hider grants incorrect or misleading information. Playing dumb is another form where the knowledge hider acts as if s/he is ignorant of the requested

knowledge. This dimension, like evasive hiding encompasses deception. Third, when knowledge hiders provide explanation for not sharing the knowledge and blame the other party, is called rationalised knowledge hiding (Connelly et al., 2012).

Organisational contexts enhance knowledge hiding (Connelly et al., 2012). Empirical evidences stated the knowledge hiding takes place when the individual senses the same from the co-worker and the feelings of distrust arise. Contrary to this, very few will be engaged in knowledge hiding behaviour in those organisations where knowledge sharing climate is well developed. Gallus et al. (2014) referred organisational environment for incivility as “the extent to which employee tolerates incivility at workplace”. In a civil climate, incivility is not tolerated therefore; few instances of incivility are expected. Gallus et al. (2014) found that 85 percent of their study participants had encountered incivility at workplace in the past year. Such empirical findings regarding trust and knowledge sharing climate lead to explore other variables that possibly stimulates hiding behaviour. The relation between incivility and knowledge hiding is based on the norm of reciprocity and social exchange theory (Gouldner, 1960). Positive leadership is based on reciprocity norms of trust, honesty and equal mutual exclusive exchange of privileges (Settoon, Bennett, & Liden, 1996). Intention between co-workers are ruled by an implicit and imprecise social exchange (Blau, 1964). Any individual voluntarily engaged in positive behaviour toward co-workers will implicitly evoke similar desirable behaviour.

According to Cerne et al. (2014), the existence of negative reciprocity cannot be denied in organisations. Whenever an individual observes harmful behaviour from colleague(s) (Vardi & Weitz, 2004), like intentional information withholding, gives rise to distrust and lack of confidence (Grovier, 1994). Knowledge hiding is a common reply to a specified situation, detaches employees from the social network of sharing ideas among co-workers (Connelly et al., 2012). Such prevention from knowledge sharing network divests employees of the value of the social exchanges. Hence, such employees are not socially accepted and are considered as free riders, thereby escalating the “circle of distrust” (Cerne et al., 2014). In organisations knowledge hiding is employees’ response, associated with low quality social exchange (Brandts & Sola, 2001).

Social exchange theory is a psychological and social perspective which justifies the social changes as a practice of exchange between two or more parties (Blau, 1964). Previously, to explain the interpersonal aggression and incivility at job place, the theories of social exchange and reciprocity were also adopted by Andersson and Pearson (1999) and Glomb and Liao (2003). Incivility or exchanged aggression is intuitive due to reason of naturally assaulting or threatening in response to aggression (Bandura, 1973). Hence, mutual hostility grounds the target of aggression to provoke comparable or worse response. Social exchange theory has the tendency to provoke spirits of personal responsibility, appreciation, and trust (Jang, Hong, Bock, & Kim, 2002). Since, knowledge is considered as asset, cannot be transformed by pricing (Davenport & Prusak, 1998), social exchange theory elucidates that knowledge sharing can only be observed when expected corresponding advantages between the knowledge sender and beneficiary meet each other's desires (Blau, 1964). Trust is a vital characteristic influencing knowledge sharing based on the social exchange theory, such as the co-workers interact expecting reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960). Whereas, knowledge sharing is based on trust

while distrust harms the same process. Hence, in organisations, the level of trust will be decreased with the increase of workplace incivility, thus, knowledge sharing process will be disturbed. Similarly, MacKinnon (1994) suggested that when the uncivil behaviour is observed on routine basis, the level of distrust will be increased, hence, elevating the knowledge hiding practices.

Hypothesis 1: There is significant relationship between workplace incivility and knowledge hiding.

1.1.2. The Moderating Role of Transformational Leadership

Leadership has an impact on employees' behaviours and attitudes (Bass, Riggio, 2006; Olson & Nelson, 2006). The emphasis has been on leaders/supervisors as they play vital role in changing the employees' behaviour due to the reason of job demand and control (Gilbreath & Benson, 2004; Harris & Kacmar, 2006). According to Liu, Siu and Shi (2010), positive leadership encompasses positive attitude toward skills, confidence to instigate subordinates and has the potential to elevate subordinates in desirable behaviour like trust, commitment, and well-being. Transformational leadership is perceived to be the positive leadership style, since Bass (1985) considered pioneer's motivational and hoisting impact on devotees as the centre of his definition. Transformational leadership impacts the followers' creativity that leads to improve the performance of subordinates (Akpotu & Tamunosiki-Amadi, 2013; Lin & Hsiao, 2014). Transformational leaders, they encourage their followers by developing shared agreements that, if excellently fulfilled over time, lead to development of trust on their leaders (Whittington et al., Goodwin, Coker, Ickes, & Murray, 2009). Transformational leadership has been found to be directly related with knowledge management (Ghanbari, & Abedzadeh, 2016) and knowledge sharing behaviour (Bryant, 2003). In contrast, knowledge hiding encouraged the absence of creativity and has a negative impact on performance and interpersonal relationship (Černe et al., 2014; Connelly & Zweig, 2015).

The moderating effect of transformational leadership has been checked in very few studies. For example, Jeong, Hsiao, Song and Kim and Bae (2016) found that the transformational leadership moderates the relationship between HR practices and performance, work engagement openness to change (Mansouri, 2016), moral disengagement, workplace deviance (Saidon, Galbreath & Whiteley, 2013), dynamic capabilities and firm performance (Nyachanchu, Bonuke & Chepkwony, 2017).

According to Avolio and Bass (2004), the transformational leader will not allow subordinates to involve in any impaired behaviour that is harmful to the organisation and will try to improve the level of ethical maturity of the followers. Since, there is a positive correlation between transformational leadership and knowledge sharing, it is reasonable to argue that the tendency of knowledge hiding in work place will be minimised by the vital role of transformational leadership.

Transformational leadership could accomplish this by affecting the behaviour of others to exceed personal gain by rising the degree of awareness about the values (Bass, 1985). Thus, it is rational to assume that employee will be restrained to exhibit deviant behaviour, as transformational leaders have the capability to institute norms, which in return, forms the ethical and moral conduct of employees.

Transformational leadership will moderate the relationship between workplace incivility and knowledge hiding behaviour in such a way that if there is transformational leadership style in organisation, the employees will consider their colleagues as trust worthy and will be motivated. Thus, it can be argued that transformational leadership style will evoke the positive emotions and will negate the consequences. Thus, will develop the supportive working environment, when paired with workplace incivility will moderate the relationship. Thus, we propose:

Hypothesis 2: Transformational leadership will moderate the relation between incivility and knowledge hiding such that the relation will be stronger for higher transformational leadership

2. METHODS

This study limits its target population to public sector organisations. Applying purposive sampling technique, data was collected through self-administered questionnaire. Based on the researcher's information and finding, purposive sampling technique identifies the potential direct respondents (Tongco, 2007) and parameters of population (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Moreover, the respondents (BPS 17 and above) and their respective offices were targeted to meet the sampling purpose. Around, 370 questionnaires were distributed among gazetted employees (BPS 17 and above) working at organisations established by Federal Government. The organisations targeted for the sampling were Law Enforcement Agencies, Higher Educational Institutes, Ministry of Communication, Revenue Collection and Information ministry. The Head offices were personally visited and prior permission was requested before distribution of the questionnaires among the employees. The heads of the concerned departments checked the questionnaire and formal approval was approved. A cover letter was attached with each questionnaire mentioning the aim of the study and assured them that the information will be kept confidential. The researcher personally visited the workplace and requested the employees to fill the questionnaires. The general threshold of response rate is between 50 percent and 60 percent (Babbie & Benaquisto, 2009; Oso & Onen, 2005) and the current study achieved the response rate of 66.7 percent. Among the distributed questionnaires, we collected 221 questionnaires. 16 questionnaires were somehow incomplete or incorrect for further analysis. The collected data was cleaned by eliminating the incomplete or incorrect questionnaires. The data was checked for outliers by min and max values. So, excluding such questionnaires we were left with 205, seemed fit for analysis yielding a response rate of 66.7 percent. Such a high response rate in eastern culture is normal (Tufail, Shahzad, Gul & Khan, 2017). Finally, the collected data was analysed through SPSS.

2.1. Measures

Research instruments for the current study were adopted from previous studies. All the measures were well established and were at five-point Likert scale, ranged from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly Disagree). The language of the tool was English. English is not a native language of Pakistan, though, used as means of instruction and communication in almost every organisation in Pakistan (Raja, Johns, & Ntalians, 2004). Thus, it was not an issue to translate the questionnaires into native language.

We assessed the workplace incivility with 20 items scale developed by Martin and Hine (2005). 4 items scale questionnaire developed by Connely et al. (2012) was used to measure knowledge hiding. Transformational leadership as a moderator was assessed by 20 items scales developed by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman and Fetter (1990).

3. RESULTS

3.1. Demographic Characteristics

Among the useable questionnaires 71 percent of the employees were male while the rest of 29 percent were female. 27 percent of the participants were at the age group of 22-30 years. 47 percent were between 31 and 40 years. 18 percent were between 41 and 50 years, while the rest 8 percent were above 50 years of age. The mean age of respondent was 34.21 years (S. D = 8.74). Most of the employees i.e. 77 percent were having graduate degree (16 Years). 17 percent of the respondents were having post graduate degree (i.e. 18 years) and the rest 6 percent were Doctorate degree holders.

One-way ANOVA test was applied in order to find out the control variables. Demographic variables (gender and education) were found significant, so, was taken as control variables. In Pakistani context, the same were controlled in previous studies, for example, age (Murtaza et al., 2016), gender (Khan, Abbas, Gul & Raja, 2015) and education (Tufail et al., 2017).

Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee and Podsakoff (2003) suggested the data may face the problem of common method variance due to the use of a single survey method. In behavioural research such issue is considered as latent problem. Thus, to overcome this problem the collected data was examined under Harman's one-factor test. Results indicate 34.84 percent variance was found in one factor (less than 50 percent), consequently, the issue regarding the common method bias was not faced.

Table 1

Convergent and Discriminant Validity

Variable	CR	AVE	MSV
Workplace Incivility	0.92	0.78	0.49
Knowledge Hiding	0.96	0.63	0.50
Transformational Leadership	0.86	0.77	0.45

The average variance and Mean Shared Variance were calculated to assess the measured convergent and discriminant validity. It was found that the AVE values were higher than MSV confirming the discriminant validity. Similarly, AVE values were high than the threshold value of 0.5 and that of CR were higher than 0.7 approving the convergent validity.

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviation, Correlation and Reliabilities

	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1 Workplace Incivility	2.13	0.92	(0.93)		
2 Knowledge Hiding	3.42	0.83	0.65**	(0.88)	
3 Transformational Leadership	2.92	1.32	-0.19**	-0.47**	(0.95)

N = 205; Cronbach's alpha presented in parenthesis.

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Correlation among the variables has been displayed in table 1. It indicates that there is positive relationship between WI and KH and transformational leadership has indirect relationship with KH.

Table 1 shows the standard deviation, mean, reliability and correlation coefficients of variables used in this study. Hypothesis 1 expected a direct relationship of incivility with knowledge hiding, and indirect relation between transformational leadership and knowledge hiding. The results in Table 2 (step 2) show that the direct effect of incivility on knowledge hiding was significant ($\beta = 0.278$, $p < 0.5$). Consequently, Hypothesis 1 was supported for the proposed hypothesis. Results in Table 2 (step 2) indicate that the effect of transformational leadership with knowledge hiding was significant ($\beta = -0.67$, $p < 0.5$).

In order to test the moderation role on transformational leadership, Cohen, Cohen, West and Aiken, (2003) moderated regression analysis was run. The independent and moderating variables were mean-centered. To investigate the multicollinearity among the variables the tolerance statistics (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) and variance inflation factor (VIF) scores (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 1998) was calculated. The VIF and tolerance statistics measure the degree to which correlation among the variables affects the accuracy of a regression model. The acceptable values of tolerance statistics is above 0.10 (Hair et al., 1998), and that of VIF scores is less than 5 (Chatterjee & Price, 1991). The analyses found the VIF scores were less than 2, i.e. 1.04, and tolerance = 0.96, negating the multicollinearity issue.

Hypotheses 2 predicted the moderating effect of transformational leadership on the relationship between incivility and knowledge hiding. Table 2 shows the moderation results. Step 3 in Table 2 indicates the incivility x transformational leadership interaction was found significant for knowledge hiding ($\beta = 0.41$, $p < .05$) and the value of ΔR^2 was small, yet informative.

Table 3

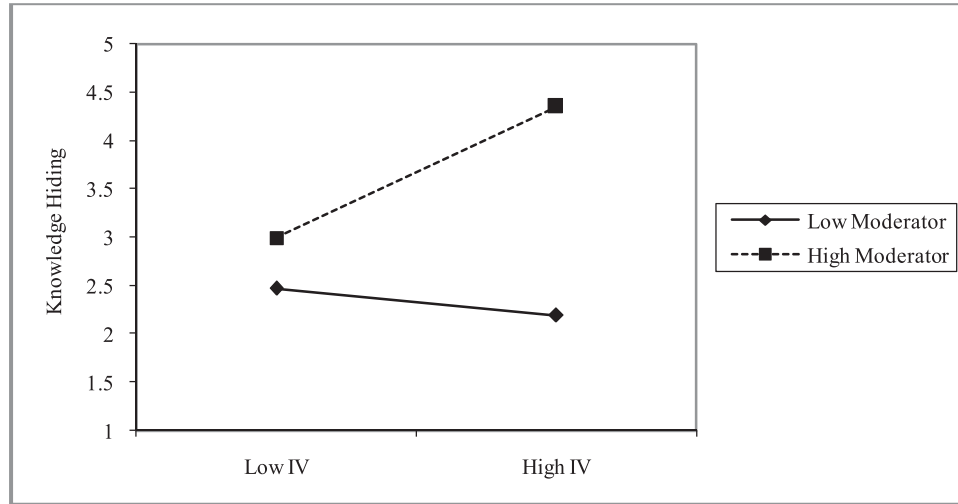
Knowledge Hiding

	B	R ²	ΔR^2
<i>Step 1</i>			
Gender		0.004**	0
Education		0.002**	
<i>Step 2</i>			
Work Place Incivility	0.56**		
Transformational Leadership	-0.38**	0.551**	
<i>Step 3</i>			
WPI x TL	0.12**	0.564**	0.013**

N = 205, ns= not significant.

**, Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Fig. 1. Effect of WPIxTL on KH

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Conclusion

In summary, the current study extended previous studies that occurrence of workplace incivility and its impact on behaviour are context free. If organisation does not focus on incivility and knowledge hiding, its consequences are not trivial. This study shows the importance and understanding regarding the incivility and knowledge hiding and confirmed the indirect relationship between the two constructs. Such act will create stress among the employees and also unhealthy atmosphere. These evidences not only enhance the understanding in this regard, but also provide new avenues for further studies.

4.2. Discussion

An emerging body of research has examined the significant effect of workplace incivility and knowledge hiding. Meanwhile, transformational leadership can be linked with knowledge hiding, and buffering the negative effects of incivility. This study investigated the link of incivility on knowledge hiding. Moreover, the current study explores the moderating effect of transformational leadership in a link between incivility and knowledge hiding.

Analyses revealed that workplace incivility was directly related with knowledge hiding. Employees who faced incivility, were reported higher in knowledge hiding. According to Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005), social exchange theory comprehends a worker's feelings and also strategy for assessment of their distinctive work occasions. Social exchange and reciprocity provides bases for the relation between incivility and knowledge hiding (Gouldner, 1960). Intentions among workers are implicit (Blau, 1964). Positive relation will evoke trust and mutual understanding and share mutual benefits (Settoon, Bernnett, & Liden, 1996). A person who does not behave in an uncivil way, in return the colleagues will also show the positive behaviour and may not have the feelings or intention of knowledge hiding. Negative reciprocity cannot be denied in organisational

setting (Cerene et al., 2014). The feeling of distrust develops upon the perception of negative behaviour from co-workers and thus evoke the intentions to harm in any way (Vardi, Weitz & Setter, 2012). Trust on each other will ensure knowledge sharing. Elimination from the loop of knowledge sharing leads employee to deprive from the benefits of social exchange (Connelly et al., 2012). The employees are not accepted and thus the environment of distrust gets intensive (Cerene et al., 2014).

Major contribution of the current study was to test the moderation effect on a link of incivility and knowledge hiding. The moderation analyses concluded a significant effect of transformational leadership and incivility on knowledge hiding. Supervisor influences the behaviour of employees (Park, Song, Yoon, S. & Kim, 2013) either positive or negative (Harris & Kacmar, 2006). Positive leadership induce positive attitude and behaviour, thus creates the environment of trust and loyalty (Liu, Siu & Shi, 2010). Transformational leadership promotes creativity (Lin & Hsiao, 2014) and thus knowledge sharing (Bryant, 2003). On the contrary, knowledge hiding holds the exchange of information, thus results in negative relation with co-workers (Connelly & Zweig, 2015). Similarly, Avolio and Bass (2004) suggested that the transformational leadership will prevent employees to be a part of any kind of unethical conduct (e.g. incivility). Transformational leadership supports the employees to have trust and motivation and foiling the negative behaviours like incivility. When employees are victimised and the feelings of knowledge hiding or any other sort of negative emotion arise, the transformational leadership will trigger the positive emotions and lesser down the intensity of such a negative behaviour. Thus, the intensity of incivility will be lesser down and the environment of knowledge hiding will not be created.

4.3. Implications of the Study

The current study brings some managerial practices for management. While experiencing knowledge hiding and incivility the management must ensure to overcome the barriers. The managers must educate the employees regarding the negative consequences to the overall organisation. In order to avoid the negative or counter behaviour of the employees, it is the duty of the manager to bring harmony and lead them to obtain the desired and targeted objectives. The manager should design code of conduct to minimise the uncivil behaviour and the leaders must be role model for employees by exhibiting civil behaviour (Pearson et al., 2005) this would help employees to ensure the ethical and desired behaviour in organisation. Awareness programs and training should be conducted in organisations and the employees must be educated regarding the harmful effect of incivility to individuals and overall organisations. Any tolerance towards incivility must not be observed. Cautions should be carried out, if such activity is being observed and has been a habitual behaviour, it must be punished. The leaders should create the environment of trust and strong organisational culture, where employees are provided with the opportunities of knowledge sharing.

Our study contributes to the current literature by examining the interplay between transformational leadership and knowledge hiding behaviour recommended by Direct relation (Khalid et al., 2018). Based on the social exchange theory (1964) incivility leads to negative behaviour for example, knowledge hiding. when employees feel less trustworthy, treated uncivil will respond in negative behaviour (Černe et al., 2014).

In organisations, to eliminate the interpersonal irritation is a difficult task (Pradhan & Jena, 2018). Organisations need to concentrate on the issue of knowledge hiding. Knowledge sharing may be exercised only when the employees feel fairly treated, and not feel exposed to uncivil behaviour. There should be an introduction to impartial policies and focus on monetary and non-monetary rewards, the knowledge hiding can be eliminated (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2005).

Workplace incivility is an emotional response, and knowledge hiding behaviour can be explained through AET theory as the events will be tempted as emotional response (Porath & Pearson, 2012). The emotional response deviates an employee from the established norms of the organisation (Ilies, Peng, Savani, & Dimotakis, 2013). Any employee experiencing the uncivil behaviour, will respond on the basis of emotional intensity and will observe negative behaviour. Leaders try to maximise the productivity of the employees (McColl Kennedy & Anderson, 2002) thus, will treat employees with grace. When the emotional intensity is stable and an employee relies on the leader the intensity to hide knowledge will be lower.

4.4. Limitations and Future Research Directions

The current study bears some considerable limitations. The data for the current study was collected on self-reported questionnaire, bearing the chances of bias. No one would like to be pointed out regarding the incivility or knowledge hiding approaches. Moreover, the nature of data collection methods was cross section in nature heading to bias. Therefore, it is recommended to conduct future studies by adopting the multi-sources data and longitudinal data collection technique. Secondly, future research can be carried out considering the contextual factors as well. The current study was carried out in public sector organisations, providing avenue to be conducted in private sector organisations. Leadership style and environment differ within the organisations. It would be interesting to explore that whether in private sector the leadership style or organisational culture support the established results or not.

Thirdly, Khalid and Ishaq (2015) suggested the political behaviours are common in Asian countries i.e. Pakistan and has the significant negative impact on the employees' behaviour. The political skilled behaviour may change the effects of negative behaviour when paired with knowledge hiding. The respondents were individuals. In every organisation informal group exist, so it would be interesting to study the group level incivility and its impact on work outcomes; the knowledge hiding concept would add to the literature, if regressed with other discretionary behaviour as criterion variables.

Lastly, the knowledge hiding does not retain negative aspect (Connelly & Zweig, 2015) therefore, it is further suggested to link knowledge hiding with positive aspect as well for example, positive affectivity, Interpersonal organisational citizenship behaviour OCBI and challenge stressors.

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